

**PARKS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**  
**of the**  
**SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

**Minutes**

A regular meeting of the Parks and Cultural Affairs of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, on Wednesday, **February 11, 2004**.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Legislator Jay Schneiderman - Chairperson

Legislator Michael Caracciolo - Vice-Chair

Legislator Cameron Alden

Legislator Angie Carpenter

Legislator Vilorio-Fisher

Legislator Ricardo Montano

Legislator Peter O'Leary

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mea Knapp - Counsel to the Legislature

Ronald Foley - Nominee for Commissioner of Parks

Roger Podd - County Executive's Office

Sean Clancy - Budget Review Office

Tom Donovan - Aide to Legislator Schneiderman

Tracey Scala - Deputy Commissioner of Parks

Lisa Keyes - Aide to Legislator Caracciolo

Frank Tassone - Aide to Legislator Crecca

Barbara LoMoriello - Aide to Legislator Cooper

Maria Ammirati - Aide to Legislator O'Leary

Legislator Foley

All other interested parties

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**MINUTES TAKEN BY:**

Donna Catalano - Court Stenographer

**(\* THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 11:45 A.M. \*)**

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. I'd like to call this meeting of the Parks Committee to order this 11th day of February, 2004. I'd like to ask Legislator O'Leary to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**SALUTATION**

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Do we have any yellow cards? Any public portion? Okay. It's being indicated to me that there are no yellow cards, so let's move forward with the agenda. Actually, one note, I guess, before we get started. My understanding is that Judy Gordon will not be staying on as the Parks Commissioner. I want to thank her for the work that she has done in that capacity since the previous Park Commission Peter Scully has moved on to be Regional Director of the DEC. I think she has done a wonderful job, and I thank her on behalf of this committee for her service to the County.

**INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS**

**1063. To appoint Maria Loreta Celitan as a member of the Suffolk County Citizens Advisory Board for the Arts.**

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Do we have a motion?

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

Is Maria here?

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Is Maria here?

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Mr. Chair, I'm hoping that Legislator Nowick has informed Ms. Celitan that people are expected to be here. I don't know if that invitation went out.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. There's a motion to table. Is there a second?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

I'll make the motion.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I'm sorry, I didn't see the second.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

I'll second, Mr. Chair. Someone will be sure to let her know to come, because she really is a valuable member of the Cultural Arts community, and I would love to see her appointed.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Thank you. There was a motion by Legislator Alden and a second by Viloria-Fisher. All in favor? Any Opposed? Okay. Motion is carried. **TABLED. (VOTE:8-0-0-0).**

**1097. Confirming Commissioner of County Department of Parks and Recreation Conservation. (COUNTY EXEC)**

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I guess we --

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

Is he here?

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

He is here, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. He is here. Do we need a motion and a second first before discussion?

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

No. Not really. We can bring him forward.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

We have Mr. Foley, Mr. Ron Foley here who is the County Legislator's appointment for the -- to head the Parks Commission -- County Executive, I'm sorry, the County Executive's appointment to be Park Commissioner. And he is here to introduce himself and to answer questions of the Legislature -- of the Legislative Committee. So first I'll turn it over to you if you want to say some brief introductory words.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Thank you for your time. I am Ron Foley, and I want to be your Parks Commissioner. I have lived in Suffolk County in the past, when I was a Regional Director of State Parks from Jones Beach to Montauk Point and Orient Point. I love Suffolk County. I love parks. I'm anxious to get back in the business. I'm looking forward to working with you. I've enjoyed the meetings we have had together in your offices and around and lunch with Mr. Montano.

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

He got lunch.

**MR. FOLEY:**

We split it. Nobody wanted to get a free lunch, so we split it. But I am anxious to get here. I think there are things we can do for the people of Suffolk County together that they'll benefit from. I've been excited about public service since I've been in it, first as a Town Supervisor and Town Justice, and I'm ready to continue that. So I appreciate your consideration, and I look forward to working with you, if you so deem.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Let's go to questions. I'll start with Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Hi. Thanks for coming down, and thanks for spending some time with me also. You currently have rented a place in Suffolk County, right?

**MR. FOLEY:**

Yes, I have. 32 Rose Place, Babylon.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

And are you currently -- you are over in the Parks Departments I think you have indicated.

**MR. FOLEY;**

No, I have not been there.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Not there yet, okay.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I didn't want to look presumptuous and go there before you say it's all right.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

I have some other questions for -- actually they will be for Counsel. And I'll do that in a little while.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Let's move on then to Legislator Viloría-Fisher.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Thank you for coming down, Mr. Foley. I too have met with Mr. Foley. He certainly has done a good job of reaching out to Legislators and talking about the issues that are important to him. The name of this committee is Parks and Cultural Affairs. And I discussed this with Mr. Foley because when I first came to the Legislature, I was a little bit disappointed on how little time we spent on the issue of cultural affairs at this committee.

And I was impressed by the work that you have done, Mr. Foley, with regards to creating a real presence, cultural presence, in the park system. Can you speak to that a little bit and what your projects were and how that developed. And I'm intrigued by the fact that you did it with very

little cost to the taxpayer.

**MR. FOLEY:**

The one you have seen and talked about was at Letchworth State Park, which is south of Geneseo, SUNY Geneseo. And it's really a very rural part of New York State, like where I grew up. There appeared to me to be an absence of the kind of performing arts that people could get if they went to Rochester, which was an hour away or to Buffalo, which is an hour and a half. And I recognized this absence, but I wanted to test that on other people as I do most things. I went around and talked to some of the business leaders, they agreed, if you could put together some kind of a series of performing arts over the summer outdoors in a beautiful place, that they would support it. And that was the seed that was really planted.

They started talking amongst themselves, then we talked to the Wyoming County Arts Counsel, they agreed. Nobody really was coming up with any money, but once you plant the seed, you go back and ask again. And we put together a ten week series of the programs from the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra to the {Stan Callela} Swing Band and bluegrass music and just an eclectic series of things that we hoped would attract people. And to our shock, it started to attract people the very first year, and it outgrew the place we had for it, we had to move to another. And it wasn't snobbish in any way, it was just, here it is, if you like this stuff and you don't want to drive an hour and a hour and a half, come and get it, it's here free, it's in one of the most wonderful places in Western New York, and it's your's. And we didn't use any state money for it, no tax money. It was all supported by businesses.

Later on, midway through when the Arts Council wanted it to grow, they put some of their grant money into it. But it was completely free to the public in hours that there was no fee for getting into the park. So people from the campground came up and people from the surrounding communities. It was also an effort to show the people in those surrounding communities that this isn't just one big piece of green space among all these farms, it has a benefit to you also. So we carried that on and did a number of other things. And we also did things when I was on Long Island, Shakespeare in the Park at Bayard Cutting Arboretum. And the thing about Long Island is it has such wonderful resources in the cultural arts that -- and I'm not sure people recognize that they are accessible to them easily.

And I think that's something we need to do. I'm not sure we need to spend taxpayer dollars on it, but I think there are people who will support such an effort and attach their name to it

because it's a good thing. And it's cheaper than buying an ad in The New York Times or Newsday.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Being the mother of a Geneseo graduate, I did have the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of Letchworth State Park, it's a terrific place. And I looked at the kind of roster that was available there in the cultural arts festival, and it really is a great program. I did want to you ask you about another issue that we discussed. Was the -- we go from the sublime to the very mundane, which is the productivity, staff productivity, I was very impressed by particular mention in your resume of improved employee productivity from 35 to 100%.

With the kind of budgetary and fiscal constraints that we're under, it's very important for us to know -- it's critically important for us to have employee productivity at its full capacity, full throttle, so to speak. And I would like you to speak to that and how you were able to accomplish that. Please, Mr. Foley.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Well, everywhere I've been there have been budgetary constraints, shrinking budgets, do more with less. This particular situation was one where the -- we ran a centralized maintenance concept. Central was in Babylon, and you know how far that is from Montauk or Wildwood or Orient. So nearly 50% of a worker's day was burned up in travel time, a little work, a break, a little work, lunch, more travel time. And I knew there was a way to resolve, but I couldn't figure out what it was. And we worked together with other managers there and determined that we could have these maintenance people report to the work site at the beginning of the day instead of this central location, we might get close to a full day's work out of them.

The union, CSEA, objected to that, it was different than the work rules that they had existing. When you were hired, you were told to report to Babylon and then go out from there. So we held open a few jobs as people left, hired some new people. As they came on board, we told them your work rules are different. Then we went back to the union, said there are people out there who want to volunteer for this, do you object to that. They said no. That gave us a core group of 25 people we called the expeditionary maintenance strike force. They reported to the park that needed the work. They were limited to three weeks in that park. They had to get done all the -- kind of nit picky maintenance things that needed to be done; outlets hanging out of walls, water faucets leaking, painting, repair the roofs, those kinds of things. But it was a

legitimate attack. There was a scout who went ahead as a supervisor and ordered the materials that were going to be needed, had them delivered to that site, and started get full days out of -- out of maintenance workers.

The later iteration of that was there was a program adopted by the state called the State Park Infrastructure Fund that took what had ordinarily been capital money and put it into higher level maintenance. Same concept was used, I think there was a dramatic -- I know there was a dramatic difference in the appearance of the safety of the parks that we assaulted in this way.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Any questions? Legislator Caracciolo.

**LEG. CARACCIOLO:**

Good morning, Mr. Foley, nice to see you again.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Good to see you too.

**LEG. CARACCIOLO:**

And as I indicated yesterday when we met, I did want to, on the record, establish some Q&A so that, as I said to you, in six months if what you indicate is your vision, your plans, don't materialize, then obviously you and I have to have another conversation. But specifically, let me just run through a laundry list here of some issues.

There has been an issue recently, something Legislator Fields was very much involved with, she identified a problem, a problem in the Parks Department that was not dissimilar to the one you faced in the state where you had park employees living in state or in our case, a county-owned facility. A, are you aware that we have such facilities in Suffolk County?

**MR. FOLEY:**

I recently became aware, yes.



**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Okay. Have you had any opportunity to take a look at as to the amount of facilities that house County employees or what the fee or rent structure is?

**MR. FOLEY;**

No, I haven't. I know the Legislature's discussed it and taken some action on it, and that's the limit of my knowledge about it.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

How do you deal with that, you know, in the state park?

**MR. FOLEY:**

The state had 77 houses that were rented only to state park employees. I think police were given priority on those houses. I lived in one. The rent was set by a formula through the State Comptroller's office. It was taken out of your paycheck. There's no way I can say that it was prevailing market rate.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

It was not?

**MR. FOLEY:**

It was not.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

And why not?

**MR. FOLEY:**

I think because for many people it was as much a pain in the neck to live in the park as it was to live somewhere else. You can never actually get away from work. We expected the people who lived in those houses to be available 24 hours a day, they were. A couple of them may have hidden out in some way or another, but most of them were there every hour to respond to whatever was needed. And that was me included. Usually a call from Newsday.

So there was kind of an opinion that this availability, 24 hour call, offset the difference between

what we were paying in rent and what was the market rate, so to speak. Now later on, Commissioner Castro took a different view. She established a market rate for some of these things, put them on the market, and now non-parks people are renting them at market rate. I'm -- I can't say which is the best. There are some errors on each side.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

I think in the examples that made the Newsday here, it was cited that there were individuals who really had little or no affiliation with the Parks Department that were in the structures. And that's problematic. And they were not paying fair market value, and that's certainly problematic. So what I'm looking for right now is a response as to what you intend to do about that issue if you are confirmed as County Parks Commissioner.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Well, as I understand it, the Legislature has passed a law requiring market rate rents and appropriations to do the assessments to establish what those rents would be.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

There is a major shortfall in this County Government, there always has been, and I hope to address it with legislation that I'll be filing shortly in that there are many local laws and resolutions adopted, but we don't have any mechanism to ensure that those laws and regulations are carried out. You know, we have an excellent independent Office of Budget Review. I know the County Executive, we funded some budget positions for him back in December to establish a mini OMB, but I think they are going to be so overtaxed that the types of things that we're talking about right now will perhaps continue to fall through the cracks. And we can not afford things like that.

It's really the manager's job. It's really the Commissioner's job. It's your department. You have that responsibility. And one of the things that I will insist on is periodically when you appear before this committee is that you provide us with updates as to how those resources are being managed, who is in those facilities, what types of rents are being collected, etcetera.

**MR. FOLEY:**

You have my assurance, I will adhere to the laws and rules and regulations of the County, the ones you pass and everybody else under the direction of the County Executive. I'm not here to play games with you. Certainly it's not rare that the State Legislature passes laws that we don't

have the wherewithal to fulfill because they aren't enough resources. You are fully cognizant of that. I'm not going to keep anything from you. On this particular question, I think there is merit in both sides of this issue.

If someone is an employee of County parks and a real asset to it, we depend on them in this way 24 hours a day, and they respond, I can see giving them a discount. But if it's someone totally unrelated to the system, where not getting any benefit from them other than the rent, then the rent -- we need to look at making it what everybody else pays.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Let me for a suggestion in terms of maintaining a file or a binder of any piece of legislation that is adopted in this County in a ready-referenced binder on your desk, and key staff should have it as well, and key personnel should be staffed to follow up on whatever requirement we may adopt, whether it's a fee schedule, whether it's cash controls, whatever it may be. How do you feel about the issue of surveillance cameras in those County facilities that collect large sums of cash?

**MR. FOLEY;**

It's a tough issue, because I trust fellows until they prove to me they can't be trusted. The cameras imply distrust. But cash is a great temptation. We have to do everything we can to ensure that we're getting what is the County's. I don't have great objection to them. I would want to talk to the union heads and make sure they understand what we're doing. They don't have to agree with me, but I want to be on the same page in understanding what's happening. I think there are appropriate places to put them both for watching what's happening with the cash and for watching what the public is doing. They're not always pure in these things.

Sometimes the public makes an accusation, employee says this, that and the other thing in their defense. You can find out what the truth is. So I'm not adamantly opposed to that. I do want to find ways, this may not be the one, but I do want to find ways to make sure from concessionaires and employees, we are getting what we're supposed to get in these contracts, whether it's an employment contract or the concession contract. As good as people are, we all know the temptation of cash. We know that it can disappear. I don't want that happening if I can prevent it. So through cameras or some other method, yeah, if it's legitimate and not a violation of someone's rights, I'm open to that.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

You may not be aware of this, but recently within the County Parks Department we had such a situation at Smith Point County Park. I suspect there are other facilities within the County park system where the county is not receiving its full due. In one instance, Legislator Alden and I requested the County Comptroller to conduct an audit at one of those facilities. I think it was a white wash audit. I don't play favorites, whether you are a Democrat or Republican makes no difference to me.

I want you to do your job just like I want the Comptroller to do his job. In this case, it was the previous Comptroller, so let me make it clear it's not the current Comptroller. But the fact remains that the Parks Department takes and deals with lots of cash and lots of money and it's essential that we get what is due to the County.

**MR. FOLEY:**

My opinion on this is all managers in the system have to be aware of responsibility to properly handle cash. We cannot wait for the Comptroller to come and do it, we can't wait for some investigation to do it. I think we need to do surprise cash counts. We need to be watching, see if people are closing that drawer after the sale. What's happening with the next one? We need to be out on the golf course checking to see if people have their receipts from the starter.

If they don't, they've either got to get out of there because we assume they came in there illegitimately or we have to find the guy who took the ten or 20 bucks and sent them out. I've been in the parks system for many, many years, I've seen a lot of tricks. And the best one is the seasonal, that last day before they're about to be laid off, gets robbed at the toll booth. Well, there's not much you can do about it. If you had a cameras there, and you see the license number on that car, you might be able to do something about it. I've seen a lot of them, I know many of the tricks. I'm sure people have invented some I haven't heard of yet, but I'm cognizant of it, and I think we need to be diligent in watching over it.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Have you had an opportunity to review the Parks Department staff levels in the Operating Budget?

**MR. FOLEY:**

In a cursory way. I've looked at budget, it's tough to figure out exactly where everything goes.

I've look at the organization chart, the list of employees. It's tough without getting there and seeing the faces and names to really understand who's doing what.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

What is the Parks Department budget for this year?

**MR. FOLEY:**

It's either seven or \$14 million, depending on how you read that budget. I haven't gotten familiar enough with your's to figure that out. How much is it?

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Fourteen.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Fourteen. Okay. I didn't know whether those two lines were the same thing or not.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

What about staffing?

**MR. FOLEY;**

Around 200, I think.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

No. No. A lot less than 200. Does Budget Review have it?

**MR. FOLEY;**

I didn't count the boxes, I just --

**MR. CLANCY:**

I don't have it right here, I can get it.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Well, it's not that important today. As you made a cursory look at the park system, you told me in my district some of the facilities you have looked at, you mentioned West Hills in Western Suffolk, you obviously have some familiarity by virtue of your previous tenure with the state in

the Long Island region, which of our assets strike you as the facility that should be enhanced? And what do you see as the need for expansion of our parks system from one that is generally characterized as being very heavy with respect to passive use as opposed to increasing the benefits and opportunity for residents to enjoy those parks that are dormant.

**MR. FOLEY:**

It's a tough choice to make to say one is better than another. You've got some very, very impressive properties. The ocean front beach at Smith Point is terrific, but it's in trouble. It's being eroded. It need attention. And I know you have just finished or are in the mist of a project to restore some of the shore front, and that's great, the problem is those isolated projects are very temporary, so we need the more global view, we need to finish up the study from the East End to the west and figure out what we do with that entire shoreline.

The parks look good that I saw overall, some better than others. They -- there are signs that there's been, you know, a reduction in funding and that more attention needs to be paid to some areas like maintenance and landscaping, things like that. People will criticize the park system, and say you have taken on more than you can ever possible maintain. I don't think that's a legitimate criticism, especially in Suffolk County. Open space is so vitally important here to the quality there, the quality of the water, the quality of life, that I don't think we should be looking at every park to be developed. I think there are some places that maybe can be.

We talked about ATVs and where they might be appropriate and where not. It's a big problem to figure out where you can put some kinds of activity without negatively impacting the environment. I'd be foolish today to say I know the answer to that question, that exactly which place ought to be developed and which shouldn't. I want to get to know them better, and I will do that. I'm not going to give you an uninformed answer.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

I appreciate that. A couple of more questions, then I'll move on, Mr. Chairman. In terms of your vision of our park system, you know, it's about 46,000 acres. I forget off the top of my head now how many actual different sites we maintain, but one of the sites that has been a long time coming is the one to establish an interpretive center in the Pine Barrens.

Back in 1998, myself, then Legislator Nora Bredes and current Legislator Dave Bishop and I sponsored a \$62 million program of which \$2 million was earmarked for this interpretive

center. I dare say then here we are six years later, no interpretive center, committees have been formed to look at this, to select a site, and by the time we get around to actually constructing one, the price tag is going to far exceed \$2 million. A) are you aware that such a facility is something that has been contemplated, but has not moved along.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Yes, I am aware of it. My vision for parks, so to speak, first, they ought to be accessible, second, they ought be safe, third, they ought to be clean. Everybody in the County and the people who visit the County ought to know about their parks. They ought to know that it's a resource and it's available to them. They ought to know how get there. They ought to be able to recognize a park entrance when they see it. And while they are there, they ought be safe, it ought to be clean, they should be encouraged to keep it clean.

Now after that very basic stuff, the next thing that is on my personal agenda is they ought to learn something while they're there. They ought to learn about their environment, they ought to learn about what their actions do to the environment. One of the first things I encountered -- I hadn't been in the state parks on Long Island for six months when the medical debris started washing up on Jones Beach. Even at that point, early in that situation when we were closing the beaches because we just didn't know what this stuff was and where it was coming from, nobody understood where it was coming from. And people were amazed to learn that what they threw on the street in New York City that washed into the storm drains went out into the ocean and came right back up on Long Island beaches.

Some of those people throwing some of the stuff on the streets were Long Islanders. That's part of the education. What you do at home, what you do in the street, what you throw out the car window has something to do with the environment you live in. Now, one approach ought to be an interpretive center that's very centralized, and I support that idea, and I would happy to fulfill your goal there. Although you know a lot -- you run into a lot of complications along the way; where you're going to put it, what it's going to look like, what's the intrusion on the environment. So there maybe many reasons that hasn't happened, very legitimate ones. But I also would like to see something more passive, if it's just signs along trail ways, if it's a sign when you are looking over at the Great South Bay, what's out there, how it got there, what it means to the rest of Long Island and a sign that talks about when you let all the sand wash off this barrier beach, the next place that's going to be attacked is your house on the bay.



Those are the kinds of things that we can teach people in their parks, I'll grant you it's not as pushy as a TV ad or something, but the people who want to take the time to learn ought to have that opportunity. So I support environmental education, it ought to be part of what we're doing. And I understand too that we've got to do a lot of other things before we get to that.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

One of the important parts of financial management in any organization, including the Parks Department, is that we have a lot of relationships with contract vendees, dozens of them. What I have found on a periodic basis along with Legislator Alden is that no one monitors those agreements to make sure that the contract vendees are in compliance. One that comes to mind is the operation down in Babylon at Bergen Point Golf Course, where for many years, the contract vendee had contractual obligations that were not being fulfilled. In addition, they were withholding tens of thousands of dollars to the County that they had a obligation to meet on a regular basis.

It was only by our intervention and us becoming aware by a cursory review of their contract that these conditions were not being met, that individuals in the past administration got on the job and followed up and made sure, a) we got the money and, b) the improvements were made. I can assure you I intend to continue doing that, but who in your administration would have that responsibility, you have Deputy Commissioner, I think there's one or two, you know? My observation in the past has been there's a lot of high salaried employees, but I've never been convinced as to the merit of what they did. And I want to be assured today that whomever you replace there, a) is competent and, b) will look at issues that I am describing right now. Can I have that assurance.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Well, yes. My perception of -- you know, without knowing all the details is, we can't afford to replace anybody with an incompetent person. We just don't have the resources. We have to have smart people, we have to encourage them to be effective and efficient and responsible. I'm not going to tell you today that I'm going to assign any one person the responsibility to look over the shoulders of concessionaires, I'm going to make it everyone's ethic that these people are here under contracts in which they promised us to do certain things and pay certain funds.

It's all our responsibility to be watching that stuff and making sure we get what we're supposed to get. I'm not talking about beating them up and requiring things of them that aren't in the



contracts, but I care about getting what we're supposed to get. And I expect the people that work for me to have the same concern, whether it's a Deputy Commissioner or our manager at park or something like that. I can't be nor can the deputy be every place all the time. The park manager has a certain responsibility for knowing what's going on at their facility. Now, let me go back a few steps. There was and I think still is to some degree a mentality that once we put these facilities in the hands of private operators, okay, that's off our back, we don't have to worry about that anymore.

Decision makers have done that and taken away sometimes the wrong resources when that's happened. When people think -- when you privatize something, sorry to use that word, that it's just off your plate are wrong. You still have to keep on board enough resources in staff or systems to make sure you are getting what you want to get. And I'm not saying every private business is crooked or trying to cheat us, but there are a lot of temptations along the way to cut some corners if nobody is looking. So it's just due diligence.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

So you're saying, in effect, the park managers in each facility would have that oversight function and responsibility.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I'm saying it's an ethic I want through the system. Different people will be responsible for different pieces of it, and will all collectively have responsibility for everything. Now, there may be -- I don't know today, there may be one person who is in charge in of some kind of an audit program. I can't tell you today who that is going to be or that I know I have the resources to do that.

But it's going to be a standard throughout everybody's mind that we have a responsibility. It's not gone, it's not not our's anymore. That's the way we will do it. As soon as I can answer that question better after I've been there a while, I'd be happy to tell you who's responsible for it and who's doing what.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

I would just hope it's not a Legislator that brings to your attention some malfeasance or worse that's going on in the Parks Department.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I hope if a Legislator knows about it and I don't, that they do bring it to our attention.

**LEG. CARACCIOLO:**

Well, we definitely will.

**MR. FOLEY;**

I don't mind coming here and having you beat me up because I miss something, and it's going to happen. You know, I'm not going to catch everything. And I hope we're working together on this and we have the same responsibility for ensuring the people get what they're supposed to get.

**LEG. CARACCIOLO:**

With respect to fees and the establishment of fees in County Parks Department, it's something you have dealt with now, in the past when you dealt with the state system, fees were adopted in Albany and essentially you made sure that patrons and others complied with the fees and so forth. Here fees have always been somewhat of a contentious issue at budget time because they have increasingly become more and more the essence of what the Parks Department's Operating Budget becomes. It's up to, I think, at last count somewhere around 80 or 85%.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Eighty-seven, I think.

**LEG. CARACCIOLO:**

Eighty-seven percent. I have always felt that given a County of our size, 1.4 million people, the amount of money people pay for County taxes, that we should be able to provide reasonable fees for them to use their own facilities and that the focus should be on out of County residents that use our facilities when we consider increasing the amount of revenue that's needed from a fee structure. Your thoughts on that.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Well, I think we have to be careful that we don't turn away the people who need the parks most by making fees unbearable. I share your priority that nonresidents ought to pay more than others, but I think we have to be careful too there. If there are people coming from other states to see the wonderfulness of Suffolk County, I don't want to turn them away with just an out-

right usurious fee and not have them spending monies in hotels and motels and restaurants outside the park because they can't afford to come and enjoy what's here. So I think every time you sit down and make this judgment on fees, you have to be looking at who you want using your parks in terms of residents, what benefits you are bringing to the County in the global sense from tourism. And I don't want to be mesmerized by the goal to get parks totally self-sufficient by fees.

You know, I suppose I'd be proud of the fact that we had a parks system that was 100% funded off the General Fund, but I wouldn't be proud of that if it was turning people away who needed it. It's a complex thing where you've got to look at a number of different things, we've got to make sure the economy of the County benefits from tourism by welcoming people, not killing them with fees. And we've got to make sure our own people are not killed by fees.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Well, we have an easy way to do that. We have a green card system, so we know every time a County resident is using the park facility, particularly our golf courses, which is our main revenue driven facilities. And I would suggest that one of the first things you do is take a look at that, because I can tell you today, that those four County golf courses with the exception of Indian Island during the summer where there's a good mix of nonresidents that use the facility, but on a year round basis, every one of our facilities overwhelmingly is used by County residents.

So I think the concern you raise, while it may be valid in state parks and some other venues, is not as valid here. But I'd be interested to hear back from you in a few months to see if you've had an opportunity to break that down. Park district, there's been talk by Legislators and others about the establishment of a parks -- County parks district. Are you familiar with that.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Only a little bit. Again, I told you yesterday I read something about Monmouth County in Jersey, I know they have one, I am not sure exactly how it works. My reaction to it is it depends on which hat I'm wearing at the time. A parks guy always wants to see unlimited resources come in so you can do everything. In a more global sense, it's kind of dividing up government, losing control over a piece of it. And I fear although I don't know this, and I'm speculating here, that when you set up a separate taxing district like that, you are implying a tax increase, that would bother me. That's limited knowledge.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Okay. And final question, has Mr. Levy in conversations with you about taking on this position implied or suggested that you may have to do more with less this coming year and next?

**MR. FOLEY:**

Yes. And it's something I've heard often through my history with government. And I can't tell you exactly how we're going to do that. We're going to take a look and figure it out. It's going to be imagination, it's going to be raising money outside through corporate sponsorships, I think better partnerships with not profit organizations, building a bigger core of volunteers, although that's management challenge. But we're going to imaginatively find ways that we can get more resources into the parks without spending more of the taxpayers' money.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Has that been quantified as to how much more with less?

**MR. FOLEY:**

No.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Okay. Mr. Chairman, I would note then that absent some idea of how this nominee who deal with those types of restraints, I would be reluctant today to move this nominee forward. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I'll continue to take more questions of other Legislators first on the committee. I know Mr. Foley who is not on the committee has asked to be recognized, but I'd like to stay first with the committee. Legislator Montano.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Mr. Foley.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Yes.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Pleasure seeing you again. As you indicated, we had a meeting yesterday over lunch, and as all of Levy's prospective appointments, I want to congratulate you on your appointment -- pending appointment. I've looked at your resume. I deem that you are imminently qualified for the position that you have been proposed for. And just to reiterate some of the comments that were made yesterday from my perspective, coming into the Park Department, I know that you can't be tagged with the issues that preceded your appointment, and hopefully your confirmation, but one of the things that concerned me was the personnel, and what I perceive to be the lack of diversity within the personnel in the Parks Department, particularly those positions at the entry level, which as we indicated yesterday, lead to other positions within the department.

And that's an issue that is particular to me and the community that I represent. And I just wanted you to reiterate some of your comments with respect to that issue that I brought forward yesterday in terms of what your commitment is for the future of Suffolk County and the outreach that I hope to see in terms of bringing to the Parks Department a more diverse employment.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Well, my commitment to it really rises from my history. At Long Island State Park's we were serving an increasingly diverse clientele. The people who were coming to the park were changing the make up of the what the tradition was. And it became important to deal effectively with them and the cultural differences they brought with them to diversify that work force, not because it was trendy or anything else, to be successful, we had to know what people coming to us liked, disliked and were going to do or not do. We took great pains through an affirmative action officer. And again, training the managers and instilling in them the values that diversity was beneficial, especially given the clientele we were dealing with. Not everybody took to it. We had to be tougher in some parks than others with the supervisors to get this right.

But we did increase the diversity of the work force. We promoted more women to management positions than had ever been done. We weren't always successful. And we had to recognize that you had to take measures to get rid of the bad apples and promote the good ones. So my commitment to you is to be fair to everybody, regardless of their ethnicity, to find ways to promote people that reflect the diversity of people coming to the parks. And that's been my history, and I commit to you I'll continue to do that.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Do you have any idea of the level of diversity or the lack of diversity within the Parks Department as it presently exists, or is it too soon at this point?

**MR. FOLEY:**

I don't know.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

I would understand that. Again, I want to congratulate you on your prospective appointment. Look forward to working with you in the future on the issues that will be particular to both the Parks Department and myself as a Legislator. Thank you very much. Welcome to Suffolk County.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Thank you. I'm honored to be here.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Mr. Chair, can you put me on the list, please?

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I'm on the list too here. But first, any other Legislators on the committee who have not had a opportunity to question?

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Okay. I thought there were other people waiting to speak.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Legislator Carpenter also has questions.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, because I sit here astounded after one half hour of grilling that Legislator Caracciolo finally found something on which to state an objection. And what he found I found to be quite paradoxical coming from the person who took a field trip with former Commissioners in order to show them models and examples of how other counties in the region managed their park systems, managed their fiscal -- their fiscal programs. I took, so did

Legislator Alden, took a field trip to New Jersey. Legislator Alden, correct me if I'm wrong, was it Monmouth County?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Paid for at my own expense.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Oh, me too. Yes, we paid for our own field trips. However, the point of it was to look at how that park system worked and to help to share with a sitting Commissioner what we thought might be a paradigm, a new paradigm, of how to model our parks system. To have someone come before us as a prospective appointment to that position and expect him to have on hand ready to give us a new model for the Suffolk County Parks or to have a complete handle on the whole fiscal framework of our park system is beyond absurd. And I was astounded.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You are both entitled to your opinions.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Yes. And that is certainly my opinion. My opinion, furthermore, is that as I peruse the -- my memory with regards to previous Parks Commissioners, when I first came on board, and I was chair of this very committee, I met with Commissioner Frank, and I have to say that Mr. Frank was very frank. And he said, we have a problem, we have a growing number of acres of parkland and we have a decreasing number of employees in the park system. And we have known that that has been a problem throughout -- did you want me to yield for --

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Just for a second. Legislator Viloria-Fisher would it -- and I'm just going to make a suggestion, would it be better to hold your comments when we are debating the bill and let Legislator Cooper and Legislator Foley ask questions? Because then, you know, like, that would seem to be more appropriate.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Okay. Well, this is leading to just a very short question, okay? Commissioner Frank who had been a sitting Commissioner, came to me and said, we have this issue and can we work together to try to find a solution. And park stewardship was something that came together on as something that would be a way of solving a problem. Mr. Foley, there was, as Legislator



Caracciolo said, one area where he felt uncomfortable with voting in the affirmative today. Can you please share with us what your view would be with regards to areas where you either -- I'm not really quite certain where the disagreement occurred, it wasn't that crystalized for me, but would you be willing to with the Legislature -- with the Legislature as a whole or Legislators individually to try to find mutual grounds, a mutual ground where we can move forward and work together?

**MR. FOLEY:**

Yes.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Thank you.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I expect that our working together will be on a continuous enough basis that I will have a sense of what your priorities are. And if I get hit with a challenge that cuts something or reduces expenditures by some amount overnight, as happened with the state, I'll know what's in your heads enough to know what you would do if you had the same challenge. And that doesn't mean we'll always agree and that I'll always do exactly what you would have done. But I hope we'll be talking enough that I have a sense of what's important to you and where we take actions as we have to.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**LEG. CARACCILOLO:**

Since the Chair is out of the chair.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Legislator Caracciolo was out of the room when some of the comments were made --

**LEG. CARACCILOLO:**

You know, I have been very polite with respect to a colleague's repeated attacks, they began at the Organizational Meeting. And it seems that she thinks, and I'm referring to Legislator Viloria-Fisher, that some how or another we're just going to play this silliness all year long, and I'm not



going to sit here and take it. My remarks stands as they were said.

There's nothing paradoxal about what I said. I'd like to know before I confirm a nominee as to what that individual's vision is and how he is going to deal with budget constraints, which he knows is forthcoming. And that there's nothing that anyone should be surprised that I would take such a position. I've been very consistent over the years. And as you and others know, I don't play favorites. There are no party labels when people sit there. So let the record stand as it's been established, and let's move forward, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Other Legislators, I hope we don't --

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

I won't dignify that with a response.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

If I may, since I haven't had an opportunity yet, first of all, I thank you for meeting with me yesterday. And I know I asked a lot of questions, and I appreciate your candor in answering those questions. And some of them were difficult questions. Today, I really don't have a lot of questions for you. You know, I will state on the record that I did do my homework, I spoke to several people who worked under you, I spoke -- also spoke to an individual who worked over you, and I got very strong recommendations in general. So I feel confident that you are competent to -- for this Commissioner's position. We do have a residency issue in this resolution, that you are, I believe, aware of, that the County Charter requires a one year residency prior to the appointment.

It's somewhat unprecedented to make a request as this resolution does to waive that County Charter, which may mean that should -- even if the committee and the Legislature is inclined to see you in this position, that we may feel compelled to not amend that charter, not waive that provision, which would not preclude you from acting as Commissioner, but it would preclude us from appointing you for a year potentially until you met that residency retirement. Now, I do know that you are familiar with the County parks, you spent seven years here. I know that the -- when you were heading the parks for the state, the Long Island parks for the state, that you had a larger budget than you will have here, significantly, \$50 million budget and a lot more employees. So I feel fairly confident that with a smaller scope, that there's no question that you

would be able to handle those responsibilities. Many of the questions I might have had asked by colleague, Legislator Caracciolo.

You talked -- and I'd like the philosophy of two of the things you said, in terms of parks are for people, the accessibility issue, I liked that you said that parks shouldn't necessarily have to demonstrate their existence through earning enough income to justify themselves, when I feel that these are public assets, and I understand the role of subsidies and making parks available to all. I would like maybe a comment on increasing the accessibility of parks, particularly some of the parks that are not now accessible to camping, for recreational vehicles or for even tents. Have you given that any thought to make them more affordable? Because these types of vacations are the kinds of things that some people of more modest incomes, it's a way that they can get away and recreate, where they may not be able to stay in an expensive hotel.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Yeah, I have thought about it some, and I don't have -- again, I don't have the magic wand today to say here's how we're going to do this or here's exactly where we're going to do this. But I know there is great pressure here for athletic fields, there's great pressure for more camping. The Smith Point campground is maxed out all the time, which says there's a lot of people who want to do that, and probably can't because they get in too late. The other thing, and again, this is more a personal agenda than anything, I think where there are opportunities, we need to link these parks up with trailways. I think we can do it without a lot of money. I think there are people who want this bad enough that they'll help us do it for bicyclists, walkers and hikers and things like that. So there are opportunities.

And I think in the current fiscal situation, we have to be careful about getting too ambitious about these developments, because I -- really speaking, I don't think we're going to get the resources to do it. Now, if -- I will come to you, come to the County Executive first with ideas of what ought to be first on this list of expanding and developing. Then you will have to decide whether it's important enough for funding. Because many significant developments can't be done without some kind of funding.

So the County Executive's going to lay out his agenda for the park system. I'm going to come with ideas of my own, we'll bounce those around. You'll hear about them, we'll bounce them around, and we'll see where we go from there. But I do know there's a lot of pressure for recreational outlets on Long Island. I think to the degree we can responsibly fulfill them, we

should.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you. I'd like to go to Legislator Carpenter who also had questions. And, I think, Legislator Cooper, you also had questions?

**LEG. COOPER:**

Yes, I do.

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

Thank you. I too want to thank Mr. Foley for being so gracious and coming to see me at my office. We spent a good deal of time speaking about his philosophy and vision for the parks and his feelings about a number of issues. And I told him then that I was probably going to ask some of those very same questions today just to get him on the record. But I was -- I was really very impressed. And I think he will be a very good asset. I did not hear about the Letchworth Park initiative when we were talking. But something that you said, the phrase that you used, about having to demonstrate that message or get that message out to the public that the parks are a benefit, a benefit to you. And sometimes we haven't always gotten that message out.

And as I said to you the other day, there aren't many things that people can point to specifically that they get for their County tax dollar. And certainly the parks are really at the top of that list or on an equal footing with public safety. And I think it's important for us to try to encourage people is use our parks. There's no reason for some -- for a family that enjoys camping to feel compelled to get in the car and go over the Tappansee Bridge or the Throngs Neck and go Upstate, because they can pull off Vets Highway into Blydenberg Park, and within seconds forget that they were on Vets Highway and feel like they are Upstate. So the long and the short of it is that I'm wanting you to reiterate your commitment to that kind of philosophy.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Well, part of -- part of the recipe of accessibility is knowledge. We have to tell them that these things are out there. And it's always been problematic how you do that. I think there are number of possibilities here for doing that. You each have various communications with your constituents. Parks are good news. They ought to be in every one of your news letters or whatever it is. And not just that something wonderful happened there, but here's what's there,

here's how to get there, it's all your's. You know, outside your district, geez, there's a wonderful place down the road in somebody else's district that's yours too, go there, try it out. We need to have some kind of concise comprehensive piece of literature that's available in a number of different places, including your offices to tell people what they have. It is their's, they are paying for it. We need to get the word out.

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

Along those lines, I had worked with the Parks Department a number of years ago in conjunction with the Community College, and I did not mention this to you the other day, and we developed what was called, "Suffolk Celebrates Summer." And it was an event held in early May, late April. And we did it at the Western Campus, and it was meant to -- just waiting for a little quiet -- it was meant to provide a venue for people to come on a Sunday afternoon to learn about the many resources and many activities there were available for them over the summer particularly, so that they didn't feel compelled to have to leave Suffolk County.

We held it at the Western Campus. It was done before the exhibition center was completed. And the first year -- second year that we did it, there were torrential rains that day, and this was an event that was outside. So I would like to ask that once you are in place that you pursue that initiative and that we look, and I would pledge to work with you on that, that we bring that event back into place. I mean we had a golf pro there, you know, demonstrating driving techniques and giving a mini lesson and showing people -- giving them literature on the various golf courses that we had. We had another group setting up a tent, camping group reminding people that we had camp sites and the various campgrounds that we had. And it cost nothing. And it was a marvelous opportunity too for the Community College to showcase their campus. So it really had a dual purpose.

So I would ask that you look into some of that stuff that exists. I know that Debbie Epple, who is now with public information and Emily LaGrant who I believe is still in parks both worked on that initiative. We actually had a mini kind of craft fair, had dealers come in who -- so you can bill it as a craft fair and encourage women to want to come there for the afternoon. And the kids, you know, we have various things that they could do. And there was entertainment. I mean, it was a nice event. Not very well publicized the first time, but -- and then the weather hurt it the second time. As Legislator Vilorio-Fisher said, I too feel that we need to continue to put that emphasis on cultural arts, and certainly your background and some of the things that you have done gives me a sense that we are going to be going forward with that. The other

thing I want to ask you about this afternoon is trap and skeet, the range that was closed that I feel committed to doing everything I can to see that we get it reopened as expeditiously as possible, and I ask what your feelings are about that.

**MR. FOLEY:**

County Executive Levy told me in one of the discussions we had about parks that that was a priority of his, to get that reestablished. I've read through the study that was conducted after it was closed making an assessment of walking away from it permanently or opening it back up. My kind of condensed version of that is that the pollution issues seem to be in a state that they can be dealt with. The one remaining tough issue was noise, that the level of noise at some of the various test sites when they conducted this study was above what the County Law dictates.

But it did also indicate that there were ways to contain that noise, to keep the impact below the County Law. So it's in a state of flux. I think we have to look and see what it costs to meet all the requirements of the law and make sure the neighbors are properly treated, even though as you point out, they came after it was there. There is a County Law and we ought to be abiding by our own laws. So let's see what it costs, let's see what it takes to get it back open and go from there.

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

The other area I wanted to touch on was the continuing commitment to historic preservation. We've acquired many historic sites, the last of which -- well, the Scully Estate was the last one we did, but prior to that, the one that I'm most concerned with is Sagtikos Manor. We have put money in the budget in the Parks Department specifically earmarked for Sagtikos and to make sure that we continue the County's commitment to getting that site in a little bit better condition than exists now.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I've got a very solid commitment to historic preservation. I agonize over the expense of it, it is very costly to restore and maintain historic buildings. But again, it's more of a personal agenda than anything. I believe that the knowledge and the history of where we came from, how we grew as a country and how we grew as a county or a state or whatever it is, is very important to going into the future. I think we need to be able to look back at some of the grand estates and see how people lived and why it was such an important part of Suffolk County or the north shore or whatever it is.

I think we honor some of those past people who build the places we live by respecting their legacy. There are treasures that if lost can't be retained or can't be gotten back. So I support it. Again, I have a tough time with how much it costs to do it, but I'll do the right thing by historic properties.

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

Well, I feel very confident that you will. One question I do have about staffing, do you foresee a tremendous amount of turnover in the department? I know historically, and it certainly is understandable, there's, you know, new leadership at the County, you know, Executive's level, and he is going to want his people in place, and I'm happy today to see someone before us who certainly is qualified, but do you think there are going to be major changes otherwise in the department or, you know, will there be some sense of continuity with some of the people that are in place?

**MR. FOLEY:**

I haven't seen or talked to the people who are there. I don't go in with any intention of sweeping out a bunch of employees. And in some ways, this frustrates people in my style, I'm not going to make any big splashy moves on employees or changing direction, things like that. It's going to be a sense of continuity adjusted over time as I learn who these people are and what they're best at. Maybe some adjustments need to be made. I trust people until they prove that they can't be trusted. I'll -- if an employee has made a mistake, I'll work with them to indicate how that was wrong and how the future needs to be different. If I have to fire somebody, I'll fire somebody. It won't be because of who they know or who they are, it will be because of what they did or didn't do.

I think to be fair to the entire work force, you have to get rid of some people who are not carrying their load. And that's the only reason I'll be getting rid of people, that I -- and I don't anticipate -- I don't think there are a lot of opportunities for changing staff at the top in terms of appointments. I just don't believe it.

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

Thank you. I appreciate that. One comment you made early about looking at things and having ideas and bringing it to the County Executive first, that kind of made me pause, because I just want to reiterate what has been said oftentimes that we are coequal branches of government.



This is the body that sets the policy. And I think it's going to be very, very important that we keep the lines of communication open, that you feel comfortable in reaching out to the Chairman of this Committee and any of the members especially with anything, you know, in their Legislative districts if there are anticipated initiatives so that we're not locking heads, that we can, you know, really work together to make the parks everything that they have the potential to be for the residents of this County and for the hundreds of thousands that are going to come and visit and pay the fees and enjoy our facilities.

The one last thing I'm going to say, and I know this is not going to come as a surprise to you, because I did tell you this when we met the other day, the one issue that I do have a concern with is where the resolution asks us to waive the charter. And that is problematic for me. But what I'm hoping we can do is to see that the County Executive who certainly has the power to do so to hire you today as the Acting Commissioner. And one year from the date that you start employment, that I be delighted to sponsor that resolution to confirm you as the Parks Commissioner.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Thank you very much. Just on those points. There will be open lines of communications, I think you know that. But I will always respect my boss, the guy who brought me here, the guy who sets the agenda on his part of the government. But we will always talk. I will never lie to you. If there is something I don't know, I'm not going to make something up. I'm going to tell you I don't know it. I hope we're working together. I think I've said that repeatedly, that I look forward to working with each one of you. I appreciate the time you spent with me leading up to this. I learned a lot from you, and I think there's a lot more I can learn. I'm always open to that. And I'll have my ideas and my priorities, and I hope we can talk about those.

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

One final thing. I just want to say I do appreciate that you were very respectful of this body and that you did reach out to, I believe, all of the members of this committee. And I know that that has not necessarily been the case with some of the other prospective appointments, so I thank you for that. And I think that bodes well for the kind of Commissioner eventually you will be.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I thank you too. I apologize to Mr. O'Leary that we couldn't get our schedules to match up, but we'll try.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Legislator Cooper is next on the list.

**LEG. COOPER:**

First, I want to echo the sentiments by Legislator Carpenter and thank you for your intensive efforts to outreach to us before this committee meeting and also for coming here today and submitting yourself to fairly intensive questioning. Everything that I've seen and read lends me to believe that you will make an excellent Parks Commissioner. I do look forward to working with you. I did have one question though. In your resume you mentioned the monies that you raised from private sector sponsors for various programs in the arts and recreation when you worked at the New York State Office of Parks.

And you may not be able to fairly answer this, but do you feel that sufficient effort has been undertaken here in Suffolk County for corporate outreach and to try to obtain sponsors for parks and programs at our parks? And do you have any idea as to whether you will be able to do any better job than has been done historically here? Because I think it is very important, particularly in tough budget times for us to find private sector sponsors to the extent possible.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I can't make a judgment on how they did in the past, I just don't know, and whether I can do better or not, but I will tell you that it's -- it's a good way to fund a lot of things in parks that you wouldn't do otherwise, and that I'm making to you a commitment that we will pursue those things. Whether we will get more or less than they got in the past, I just can't say today, because again, I told you I wouldn't tell you anything I don't know. But I think there is an opportunity on Long Island, Suffolk County in particular, that doesn't exist in other parts of the state because promotion or advertising is relatively inexpensive out of state compared to what it costs here to get your corporate name out.

So if you can attach your corporate to something good without crossing that line into what some call commercialization, and I think we can do that, we need to test the line and figure out where it is, but without getting crass and getting into a point where it's offensive commercialization. I think there are a lot of opportunities for us to do good things in partnership with the corporate world.



**LEG. COOPER:**

Could you perhaps elaborate just a little bit as to what you did do at the state level to give me an idea as to what sort of corporate outreach you did undertake.

**MR. FOLEY:**

Now, virtually every recreation, every active recreation program, many environment education programs were funded by some mix of corporate sponsors. We used very little state money to put on bicycle rallies, we had a ten week long foot race program, a lot of musical events in the parks, a lots of those kinds of things were funded completely outside the state budget stream.

Again, Commissioner Castro has taken that even further. She has found ways to get these corporations to construct facilities in parks, playgrounds, benches and things like that. At a place like Planting Fields Arboretum in Nassau County, we used a lot of corporate money to rehabilitate facilities. A lot of -- there was a group up there called the Friend of Planting Fields that has since merged with a another group, they funded a great deal of the improvements we did up there, because the state just wasn't able to put the money into it. The magic that we found there was once you have a group like who's willing to put some money in, it freezes up the state money then. They look much more positively on paying for part of something than they do for paying for it all.

So there's some leveraging that can go on, I think. It's -- the one difficulty with the corporate sponsorship is it usually is programatic, they like the programs that are splashy and a lot of people involved, and they get to use more than they like at the facilities. I don't think that's an impossible area to get into though, and I want to spend more time on that.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Thank you, Mr. Foley.

**MR. FOLEY:**

You are welcome.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you, Legislator Cooper. Okay. Legislator O'Leary.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

Hello, Mr. Foley. I too want to apologize for not being able to get together with you, to sit down and pick your brain, so to speak, as to your vision of the parks in Suffolk County. But sitting here during this confirmation process and hearing your testimony as well as the questions posed to you by my colleagues, I feel that you are eminently qualified for this position. But as you are well aware, what has come out from this committee is the fact of question of the residency requirement with respect to the charter.

Now, as I understand it, there is no problem with respect to the code itself, but would be a precedent, this would be of a precedent-setting nature, for us to waive the charter. And perhaps Counsel can at some point in time during this hearing just clarify that particular position. But I do want to go on the record as saying to you that I am pleased with your qualifications and of the opinion that you will be a fine Commissioner when and if confirmed. My question to you, sir, would you be willing to work as Acting Commissioner until this matter is resolved?

**MR. FOLEY:**

Yes. I don't care what you call me.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

Thank you very much.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I want to do the work. I want to be in Suffolk County. I have a full commitment to be here as a resident. I've already established my residency in Babylon.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

But you are not now currently working for the Parks Department?

**MR. FOLEY:**

No. I have not been there. I don't want to presumptuous and go there before you have done whatever you need to do.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

But it's your statement that you would be more than willing to work as an Acting Commissioner until this matter is resolved?

**MR. FOLEY:**

Yes.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

Okay. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

At this point, I'd actually like to defer to the Counsel to the Legislature on that particular question, because there was some question in my mind as well whether you actually where in violation of the County Charter, the way it was written -- the way it is written. So I'd like our Counsel, Ms. Knapp, to answer that question.

**MS. KNAPP:**

The question was presented to me as a result of the wording of the second resolve, that specifically asks that the residency requirements set forth in the Administrative Code and in the Charter be waived by virtue of this resolution. And the Administrative Code provision allows for a waiver by resolution. However, the requirement in the Suffolk County Charter, which is -- it's not unique. There is a one year residency requirement actually for the County Executive. And I didn't go through the Charter line by line, but it may be the only two. The Commissioner of Parks is required to be a resident of the County for a period of one year prior to his appointment as Commissioner.

And the resolution that's before the Legislature is a simple resolution. There's a legal doctrine of Legislative equivalency that requires that an act be only amended or repealed by an act of similar legal consequence, and clearly a simple resolution is not the same as a Charter Law. As a result, the legal question being presented seems to be answered that you can't waive that requirement in the charter by a simple resolution.

**LEG. FOLEY:**

Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Building on that question, does his seven years of prior residency within Suffolk County qualify under the Charter or should that be read that that one year prior residency is immediately

preceding the appointment?

**MS. KNAPP:**

Again, there is no specific state -- any state court decisions that are on point on this particular issue. However, I think you would look at the resolution as it's presented us, that indicates that the drafter of the resolution looked at the one year requirement as being something that was immediately preceding the appointment. And probably the practical common sense answer to the question is -- is if someone were born in a Suffolk County hospital and spent the first year of his life living in Suffolk County and moved for the next 40 or 45 years, would that would that meet the requirement. You know, then you get into line drawing. So while I'm not a judge and this is not being argued in front of me, I think the opinion I would have to state is that it implies that it's immediately preceding.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Excuse me, Mr. Chair. I have precedent here.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. This relates to the legal opinion just given?

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Yes.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

Through the Chair, I have question of Counsel, please. It might go to point.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. I actually think that you signaled me first, so I'll take Legislator O'Leary.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

Thank you. My question is addressed to Counsel. You referred to the fact that there are only two positions that this would be applicable for, that's the County Executive's position and the Commission of Parks, correct?

**MS. KNAPP:**

Those were only two that I found that specifically stated that it required a one year residency requirement.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

With respect to the County Executive position, is the residency requirement one year prior to, immediately prior?

**MS. KNAPP:**

It's written the same way.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

The same way as the Parks Commissioner?

**MS. KNAPP:**

Yes.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

Okay. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Legislator Fisher.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

I just quickly wanted to ask Counsel with regards to the appointment of Tom Isles, the Director of Planning who was not a resident at that time, and the last resolved when we voted to appoint Mr. Isles -- and by the way, I'm the very happy that we did waive -- waive the residency requirement at that time, because he has done a wonderful job, and I was hoping to give this to Counsel so she could take a look at it. And we'll go back to it. I didn't want to --

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Let's make copies and distribute it, because, you know, that's -- giving it to Counsel is fine, but we're the ones that are voting, so. I would prefer that we make copies, let all of us read it at a same time, through the Chair.

**LEG. FOLEY:**

Mr. Chairman, I had questions prior to you going to the vote. I just wanted no more than two or three minutes of time.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You will get it, okay.

**LEG. FOLEY:**

I'm 20 minutes late for a press conference outside.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I'm sorry about that. But, you know as I said earlier, I would first take the questions of the standing committee. Did you want to respond, Ms. Knapp to that?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

I would just ask the Chairman, you know, that we wait until all of us -- the copy was distributed to all of us.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. At this point, why don't we allow for Legislator Foley's question.

**LEG. FOLEY:**

Thank you very much. And for those who are avid readers of the minutes of committee meetings, let the record reflect that Mr. Foley and I, there are no family relations here. Simply, it's a rather common name these days. And we had a conversation earlier that when my family moved out here some time in the '40s, there were only three Foleys in Suffolk. Now when you look at the telephone book, it multiplied greatly, and they're not all related. So the same holds true with Mr. Foley as well. So I just wanted that for the record.

Secondly, I just want to also note, Mr. Chairman, that over the many years that a number of us have been Legislators, I cannot think of a candidate, if you will, for Parks Department

Commissioner who has been as qualified as Mr. Foley. We have appointed -- we have appointed other candidates to this position with far less experience, also who have had budgetary experience of only maybe a million dollars of oversight or administration or two million dollars of oversight, whereas here we have a Commissioner candidate who in the past has administered 50 plus million dollar budgets, and that's Operating Budget, that's not even including the Capital Program. He has great experience on Long Island, not only on the state level. At this time, I would say, Mr. Chairman, to have as with many other departments -- Mr. Chairman, can I have -- have some order, Mr. Chairman?

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Legislator Foley, you may continue.

**LEG. FOLEY:**

Thank you. Thank you very much. You know, at a time where there's a growing relationship between county and state governments in a whole host of ways, it makes eminent sense, not just for elected public officials, but also for other public officials, to have both County and state experience to bring that bear on the particular department they are going to administer. So that kind of background, Mr. Foley brings to this; both the state experience, as well as some county experience and Long Island State Park experience.

So we've heard, I think, from all of us around the horseshoe that everyone is impressed with his credentials, that they want him to be the Commissioner of this particular department. And while Legislator O'Leary had asked would he go on as Acting Commissioner, certainly the answer was yes, but obviously the preference is to be appointed as the Commissioner as opposed to the Acting Commissioner. So hopefully, we can move on that. The one issue that I would ask that we further discuss is not just the residency requirement and the opinion from Counsel, and many are looking at the County Charter, but when it comes to official legal positions or legal opinions concerning County Government, as much as our Legislative Counsel gives us opinions on legislation, when it comes to interpreting County Law, it is our County Attorney's Office which is the one that is -- that is -- let's say paramount here. So whether it's today during this committee meeting or soon hereafter, I would ask that the County Attorney's Office, as should be the case, the County Attorney's office should be requested to give its legal opinion on this particular residency requirement, because I also know of others, whether it's the medical examiner, Tom Isles was mentioned, where waivers have been waived in the -- where residency requirements have been waived in the past.

Certainly I hope we can do it in this particular case. But I would say just to be, let's say, respectful of the process, it's a good question that's been raised about residency. We've heard from our Legislative Counsel who drafts legislation, but under the County Charter, the controlling, if you will, opinion on these matters is really the County Attorney's Office. And then we can get into discussion as to whether there is agreement or disagreement with that. But I think we need to hear from the County Attorney's Office as well. And I'd just like to thank Mr. Foley. Just one other point, if I may, Mr. Chairman, because I have to get out to this -- to this other event outside these rooms, but we'll discuss a number of issues, whether it's Smith Point, which is in my Legislative district, you heard about the issues of cameras and cash controls, which has been an issue that Legislator Caracciolo has involved himself with, others think we don't necessarily need to be that intrusive, that there are other cash controls that have been utilized by other park systems that we can bring here that would give that kind of oversight and controls that we need.

Cultural affairs, we've discussed, environmental education. So I'm very pleased that the County Executive has submitted I would say the most qualified candidate for a Commissioner that we've had in many a decade. So I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Legislator Carpenter.

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

Thank you. I just wanted to point out to Legislator Foley, I know Legislator Vilorio-Fisher has left the auditorium, but this resolution that was just shared asking us to waive the requirement of residency for Tom Isles is a little bit different. It's kind of like comparing apples to oranges. I guess press conferences are more important than hearing about legislation. Okay. The resolution for Mr. Foley's appointment not only asks us to waive the Administrative Code residency requirement, which is what this resolution for Mr. Isles did, and that is the simple resolution. Because if you don't act within 60 days, that is automatically waived any way.

However, the second and the most compelling reason for why we really can't waive it is that that one specifically refers to the county Charter, and that is wherein the difference lies. So again, as I said earlier, I really hope that after this hearing is over that Mr. Levy does what we can do and hires you as the Acting Commissioner so we can start the clock ticking on that one year.



**MR. FOLEY:**

I can't profess to understand the legal intricacies of these things, and I don't really want to. But certainly, I would prefer to be the Commissioner. But in my opinion, and I'll defer to the County Executive and his staff, the Acting Commissioner is not unacceptable to me.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

Sir, I just want to clarify in your mind what the problem is. My understanding is that there are only two positions in the Charter that require a one year residency prior to appointment, that's the County Executive and the Commissioner of Parks. The example cited with the Director of Planning, Tom Isles, with the residency requirement was only under the Administrative Code.

There is no problem with the Administrative Code and waiving residency requirements. The problem that exists is that we have never to my mind -- or from what I've been informed is that would precedent setting with respect to waiving the Charter on the residency requirements for the Commissioner of Parks.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I believe that I understand.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

Okay. Fine. That's the issue. And I think it's important that the County Executive understands that you will be willing to work as an Acting Commissioner so he can appoint you. And if a year from now you have established a continuing residency, I don't see any problem with your appointed position being confirmed.

**MR. FOLEY:**

We have not had in depth conversations about this, so again, I defer to the County Executive and his staff.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

Well, I mean, from my standpoint, I'm not of the mindset to set precedent and waive the Charter, okay? Thank you.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I understand that.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Mr. Chairman, actually, just to add a little bit more to it, it goes to the fact that just by a simple resolution, you can't waive the Charter Law. That's the legal argument, you know, that is really, I think, pretty much binding on us when we decide which way to go. If it was just the Administrative Code, in the Administrative Code itself, it says you can waive it. So, you know, that's a kind of easy hurdle to get over. So while it's a two-pronged hurdle to get over, we got over the first one. And quite frankly, I'm impressed with you, I'm impressed with the fact that you went out on your own before, you know, like -- and I didn't even realize you weren't appointed. I thought you would have been working by now. But you went out on your own, you met with all of us, you took the time to do that, answer the questions, come here and be very forth right with us and straight up and everything.

And I just -- I wish that we could do it today but that -- I can't see how we can get around that hurdle of the Charter Law. If there was another resolution that was put in that would amend the Charter Law, to do away with that requirement, that's something we can take up, and in the proper form, pass something like that. But to amend the Charter Law or to waive the provisions of the Charter Law by a simple resolution, I don't think we have the ability. But I do have every confidence that you will do a great job. And I would hope that Steve would appoint you and get you going and, you know, let you get in there and start doing some of the things you talked about today and the conversations we had.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you. Okay. Legislator Caracciolo.

**LEG. CARACCIOLO:**

Earlier, Mr. Foley, when we were talking about the potential for adjustments in the operation of County parks, I should have brought to your attention that just last year, the former County Executive proposed to close certain park facilities on a periodic basis, which resulted in a public outcry as well as a Legislative outcry about those facilities that were chosen. So I think to give some context to my reservations, it's very important for me to know so that subsequently, we don't sit here and ask you why certain actions were taken that we find unacceptable. So I want to give you the benefit of that, some context.

And finally, the one issue I did fail to mention that I did want to mention deals with Park Police. There is a County resolution, County Legislative Resolution, that was passed a number of years ago that requires that for every 500 acres of parkland that we purchase that we hire a new Park Police Officer.

I wanted to bring that your attention, because that's one of those areas, I eluded to, that is not monitored. We don't have the staff in the Park Police that we should have, and therefore, we don't have the policing in effect that we should have. So again, I would ask that within your department that someone be designated to go back, research these resolutions, because I will be following up with you on these issues and your deputies to make sure that we are making every effort to be in compliance with our local laws. Thank you, Mr. Foley.

**MR. FOLEY;**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Again, I'd like to thank you for enduring all of our questions. I think you did an excellent job in terms of answering our questions. I find myself in somewhat of an awkward position wanting to recommend your confirmation, yet we have this procedural problem, even though in large extent I feel that you meet the spirit of that County Charter to make sure that the Park Commissioner has familiarity with the County and the County Park system.

I think technically, clearly, you don't meet the Charter. Maybe it can be resolved through an amendment to the Charter so that you don't have to wait the full year for an official confirmation, but however, you have indicated you are willing to serve as Acting Commissioner. So I'd like to move on now. I guess, the necessity would be to table the resolution. So is there's a motion to table the resolution? Anybody want to make a motion to table the resolution.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

I'll make the motion.

**LEG. O'LEARY:**

I'll second.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Motion by Legislator Caracciolo, seconded by --

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

On the motion.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Seconded by Legislator O'Leary. On the motion Legislator Viloría-Fisher.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Mr. Foley, it seems that you certainly have the support of this committee based on your qualifications, and I think tremendously, extraordinary impression you've made on all of us. And on -- based on the advise of Counsel, it seems that the tabling is the best course of action at this point in time.

And I look forward to working with you. Legislator Carpenter and I have worked on -- with Suffolk County College in the past, and I mentioned to you when we met at my office that we will be -- I'm trying to move forward with the Long Island Shakespeare Festival and using our parks for that, and I'd like to partner with Legislator Carpenter looking at that. And so it's with great reluctance that I do support the tabling motion, but on the advice of Counsel, it seems that that is the course of action we have to take at this point in time.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Again, on the motion, Legislator Montano.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Mr. Foley, I would like to apologize to you, because when I spoke to you yesterday, I indicated that you would have my support for confirmation in your position. However, I was not aware at the time that we first met -- I was not aware of the legal ramifications with respect to the waiving of the Charter provision. And in good conscience, I must reply on the fact that Counsel has indicated that this is an issue that needs to be taken -- we need to take a second look at this. Now, let me say this, your qualifications for this position are very clear. I support your nomination. I would be even willing to cosponsor or sponsor a resolution to change the Charter, I think that the one year residency requirement for a Parks Commissioner makes no sense. We want to get the most qualified person in the County, and we should not be limited by such an

arbitrary provision.

However, at this point, I'm going to have to join in the tabling motion so that we can get further clarification from Counsel, whether it be the County Attorney's Office or our own counsel here as to what our authority is as Legislators to override a provision of the code, which is the legal document by which we must move. So again, my apologies. It has nothing to do with your qualifications. I look forward to working with you. I'm sure that this issue will be resolved, if not in the immediate future, sometime after. But again, I just want to be clear that you understand where I'm coming from on this issue.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I do. I respect your --

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

No further discussion? Okay. I'd like to call the vote. All in favor of tabling this resolution? Any opposed? Okay. That passes.

**TABLED. (VOTE:8-0-0-0).**

Again, I do look forward to working with you as well. So it's unfortunate in this case.

**MR. FOLEY:**

I understand.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I hope to see you as Acting Commissioner until such time as we can confirm it.

**MR. FOLEY:**

If I can, I would just like to thank each of you for professionalism in how you have conducted this both in the meetings leading up to this and other matters and the hearing. I appreciate it very much, and I do look forward to working with you. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Let's get through the other resolutions, then I do have one speaker card that did come in. So I'd like to get to that too. I know we're at this point running late, so let's move on as quick as we can.

## **TABLED RESOLUTION**

### **1027. Establishing a turf policy for athletic fields in Suffolk County Parks. (BISHOP)**

#### **LEG. MONTANO:**

Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a motion on behalf of Legislator Bishop to table that resolution.

#### **LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

Second.

#### **CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Seconded. All in favor? Any Opposed? Okay. Passed.

**TABLED. (VOTE:8-0-0-0).**

### **1029. Renaming Unqua Place Park in the Village of Amityville as Maxine S. Postal Park. (COUNTY EXECUTIVE).**

#### **LEG. ALDEN:**

On the motion. Is that a technical inaccuracy? Isn't it Unqua Park or is it Uniqua Park?

#### **CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Well, it won't have that name much longer.

#### **LEG. ALDEN:**

But we'd have to make a Scribner's, you know, correction. We can do that between now -- because I'm in favor of passing this, we can do that between now and the meeting, we can find out what it's supposed to really be.

#### **CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I honestly don't know the name of the park.

#### **LEG. ALDEN:**

I thought it was Unqua Park though when I went passed it.

**LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:**

We don't even know if we own it yet, do we?

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Roger, if you will step forward.

**MR. PODD:**

The spelling error is just on your agenda. It's correct in the resolution. It is Unqua, and, yes, we own it. The closing was completed on December 26th.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

What is the size of the parcel.

**MR. PODD:**

It's very small.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

You can let me know later.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Thank you. Again, on 1029 --

**LEG. CARPENTER:**

Motion.

**LEG. COOPER:**

Second.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

There's a motion and a second, all in favor? Any Opposed?

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Put us all down as cosponsors.



**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. Can we put us all down as cosponsors? Okay. So that motion passes. **APPROVED.**  
**(VOTE:8-0-0-0)**

Before we move on to our speaker, I'd like to introduce Tracey Scala, I hope I'm pronouncing that right, she is the Deputy Commissioner of Parks. You may not have met her yet. If you'll stand, Tracey. I don't know if you want to say anything. You don't need to at this point, but if you want to, you're welcome to.

**MS. SCALA:**

I'll make appointments to come see everybody.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

I have a question.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Question from Legislator Alden.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Hi, Tracey. You are already working over there.

**MS. SCALA:**

Yes, I started Monday.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Great.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

That was a quick one, easy.

**MS. SCALA:**

It wasn't a difficult one.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

If you could just provide members of committee with your bio or resume of your previous experience.

**MS. SCALA:**

Sure. I'm coming from the position of Deputy Commissioner for the Town of Babylon Parks Department, and I've been in that position since January of 2000. Before that, I was an aide assistant to the Town Board in Babylon from '95 to 2000. And then I was the Deputy Commissioner where I worked on many of the issues that some of you mentioned; revenue control.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

I hope you weren't involved with OBI.

**MS. SCALA:**

No.

**LEG. CARACCILO:**

Oh, good.

**MS. SCALA:**

That was the Commissioner.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Other questions? I thank you so much. I look forward to working with you.

**MS. SCALA:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I do have one yellow card for a speaker. It gives me great pleasure actually to introduce this person who in my former life as Town Supervisor called upon many times for professional advice relating to cultural resources and archeological information. So Dr. {Gaynal} Stone, if you will come to the podium, Suffolk County Archeological Association.

**DR. STONE:**

I guess this gives Mr. Foley his first little bump into someone who uses one of his parks. I think those of you who are aware of the work the Suffolk County Archeological Association does know

that we are boosting tourism in the County through this documentary film that we're making, which has been supported by Legislator Caracciolo and by Vivian Fisher and by Angie Carpenter, because the new County Sagtikos Manor will be part of this film about the manors of Long Island. And some of them may also know about the education program that we run at Blydenburgh County Park for about the last ten to 12 years, which is considered a model throughout the United States for being a quality program. And we have been at Blydenburgh for the last ten or 12 years.

We've been at Hoyt Farm Park for 23 to 25 years. So the problem has been that we're getting sort of pushed out of the building at Blydenburgh. And there's one room at the end that needs to be fixed. And the County Parks Department doesn't seem to get around to fixing it. So I checked before I came today to see what the problem would be and -- because we have students coming as of March 16th. And the room at the end is uninhabitable. So they said that they will get there the end of March to fix it. So I think though that in the past the only way there's been action has been when members of this committee have, you know, said something to the Parks Commissioner.

So I was just coming here today to ask that something be said to the Parks Commissioner so that this room does get fixed, so that the students will be able to have a safe environment in rainy weather. We're mostly outdoors, but when it rains, we do have to be indoors.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Through the Chair, we do have the Deputy Parks Commissioner, and she is on the job. So you got those?

**MS. SCALA:**

Yes.

**LEG. ALDEN:**

Good.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And the likely Acting Commissioner I think also is still here and is paying attention. So thank you, Dr. Stone. Okay. That is it. There is a motion to adjourn.

**(\* THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 1:17 P.M.\*)**

**{ } DENOTES BEING SPELLED PHONETICALLY**